

The Enemy Within : : : By Arthur Guy Empey

Rounding Up Two Spies

ARTICLE NINE

Sergeant Arthur Guy Empey, author of "Over the Top," has won his place as one of the most vivid and picturesque writers of the Great War. In his series of articles, published exclusively in New York in The Tribune, he tells of his own varied experiences and thrilling adventures. Next Sunday's installment is "The Lone Tree Sentinel."



The Story of the Two Spies

WE WERE in rest billets in the little French village of S—, about ten miles from the front line trench. No. 2's gun crew were sitting on the ground in a circle around their machine gun, while a sergeant newly returned from a special course machine gunnery at St. Omer was expounding the theory of scientific machine gunnery. He himself had never actually been under fire with a machine gun, but from the theoretical point he sure could throw out the book stuff. I must confess that his flow of eloquence passed over my head like a Zeppelin, and I noticed an uneasy squirming among the rest of our crew.

Happy Houghton, who was sitting next to me, leaned over, and with his eye on the sergeant, whispered in my ear:

"Blimey me, Yank, isn't it awful the way he chucks his weight about?"

I agreed with Happy.

The sergeant at last reluctantly dismissed us. We dismantled our gun, put it in its box and stored it away in our billet; then we reassembled under an apple tree in the orchard, and while the rest of us indulged in a shirt hunt hungry went after our ration of tea. Hungry was sure on the job when it came to eating. Pretty soon he returned with a dixie a quarter full of tea, two tins of jam, a loaf of bread, a large piece of cheese and a tin of apricots which he had bought at a nearby French estaminet. He dished out our rations, not forgetting a generous share for himself. After we had finished out came the inevitable fags, a few puffs from each man, and the ball of conversation started rolling.

Curly Wallace cleared his throat and started in with:

"Remember that village we passed through on our march up the line about two weeks ago? You know, the one where that big church with all the shell holes in it was right on the corner where we turned to the left to take the road at St. A—?"

"Yes, I remember it," I answered.

"Well, I remember it, too," said Curly. "I was there when the Germans were shelling it, and I remember the way the shells fell."

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We all remembered it and turned inquiring glances in Curly's direction.

"Well, this morning, when I went down with the quarter (quarter-master sergeant) to draw coal, I met a fellow at division headquarters who told me a mighty interesting story of how he and another fellow rounded up a couple of spies."

"This bloke, though modestly and to make me believe that he was only through a lucky chance that he stumbled over the fellow which led to the spies' arrest; but I'm a-thinkin', and I know you'll all agree with me, that it was not so much luck as it was clever thinking. I'm not much at telling a story, but I'm going to try and give it, as far as I can remember, just the way he handed it out to me."

"It seems that this fellow who told me the story and another chap had been detailed to the divisional intelligence department and were hanging around divisional headquarters, waiting for something to happen."

"Now, here's the story as he recited it off to me:

"About three miles behind division headquarters was the old French village of B—. One of our important roads ran through it. This road was greatly used by our troops for bringing up supplies and ammunition for the front line. It was also used by large numbers of troops when relieving battalions in the fire sector."

"Of course, on account of this road being in range of the German guns it could be used only at night; otherwise the enemy airmen and observation balloons would get it, and it would be only a short time before the road would be shelled, thus causing many casualties."

"For the last ten days reports had been received at division headquarters that every time troops passed a certain point on this road, marked by an old church, they were sure to effect heavy shell fire from the Boches. On nights when no troops passed through there would be very little shelling; if any, but if a battalion or brigade happened to come this way they suffered from heavy shell fire."

"Upon receipt of the first two or three of these reports we put it down as a strange coincidence, but when the fifth report of this nature reached us it was evident to us that a spy was at work, and that in some mysterious way the information of the movements of our troops were communicated by him to the enemy."

"Myself and another bloke, who had been working with me for the last two weeks, were assigned to the task of discovering and apprehending this spy. To us it seemed an impossible job, as there were no clues to work upon. As is usual, our general, 'Old Pepper,' called us in and said:

"There is a spy working in the village of B—; go get him."

"Feckishly, I butted in and asked for further information. I got it, all right. With a lowering look which made me tremble, he roared:

"Go and dig up your own clues. What are you with the intelligence department for? Intelligence department! It ought to be called the brainless department! If you two are a sample of the rest!"

"Somehow or other we didn't stop to argue with 'Old Pepper.'"

"At this point Sailor Bill butted in. 'Blimey me, he's just like an admiral we had in our navy, this 'Old Pepper.'"

"A chorus of 'Oh, shut up! You're in the army now!' cut off Bill's story. We knew Sailor Bill. If he ever got started talking navy nothing short of a gas attack could stop him."

Sailor Bill, with an indignant glance around the circle, rasped into silence. Curly Wallace exclaimed:

"To tell with your admiral; do you want to hear this story? If you do, shut up and let me tell it."

"Go on, Curly. Never mind; he's harmless," ejaculated Happy Houghton. Curly carried on with:

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ourselves in this and waited for developments."

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"Next morning at daybreak we again took our stations in the hedge, this time bringing rations with us. The farmer used the same grays in the morning, but in the afternoon he appeared with a black and a gray, and again knocked off around 4 o'clock. No troops came through that night and there was no shelling."

"The next day the farmer repeated the previous actions—two grays in the morning and a black and a gray in the afternoon; no troops, no shelling."

"We were pretty sure that we had him, but the farmer made a problem. We didn't want to make a mess of the affair, or perhaps send an innocent man to his military police headquarters. We again took up our stations, sure enough, it was two grays in the morning, but in the afternoon he used two blacks. That night troops came through and were shelled. We had solved the problem."

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and a detail of six men with fixed bayonets, went to the farmer's house that night and arrested him. He protested his innocence, but we took him to the military police headquarters, where after a grueling questioning, he at last confessed."

"It was a mystery to us how this farmer knew that troops were coming through, because he never made a mistake in his schedule. After further questioning he explained to us that if we searched in his cellar and raised up an old-fashioned clock, we would find a telephone set. The other end of this set was established in an estaminet in a little French village eleven miles distant. His confederate was so situated on a road that troops coming into the village had to pass the door. As troops only march at night while in the fire sector, his confederate could safely figure out which side the troops would be quartered in his village until the next night, when, under cover of darkness, they would start for the front. The hill on which he did his ploughing could be easily observed from an observation balloon in the German lines, and thus the signal was given to the German artillery."

"We still carried on with our third degree, and got further valuable information from him."

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Arthur Guy Empey

is writing another book that is destined to be of the greatest help and comfort to the boys—and their loved ones at home. Watch for the publication of First Call—Guide Posts to Berlin.

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Two French Saloons Were Open

(French saloons) were still open and did a thriving business.

Occasionally a shell would burst in the village, but the civilians did not seem to mind it; just carried on with their farming and business as usual.

We decided to make a thorough search of all houses, barns and buildings for concealed wires, and did so, but with barren results. Nothing suspicious was found. This search wasted five days and we were in desperation. Watch and question as we would, not a single clue came to light.

"During this time two large bodies of troops had passed through, and each time they were heavily shelled, with dire results."

"On the sixth night of our assignment, utterly disgusted, I, being in charge, had decided to give up the whole business and report back to 'Old Pepper' that we had made a mess out of the investigation. My partner pleaded with me to stick it out a couple of days more, and after he gave me a vivid description of what 'Old Pepper' would hand out to us I decided to stick it out for six months, if necessary. To celebrate this decision my sidekick offered to blow to several rounds of drinks. Now, this fellow had never during my acquaintance with him offered to spend a ha'penny, so I quickly accepted his offer and we went to the nearest estaminet."

"Sitting around a long table, drinking French beer and smoking cigarettes, was a crowd of soldiers, laughing, joking, arguing and telling stories."

We sat down at the end of the table, and in a low tone tried to work impossible theories as to how the spy, if there was one—by this time we were doubtful—could get the information back to the German batteries."

"Right across from us were two soldiers arguing about farming. Suddenly my side-kick pinched me on the knee and whispered:

"Listen to what those two fellows across the table from us are saying. It sounds good."

"I listened for about a minute and then paid no further attention. At that time farming in no way interested me. I wanted to catch that spy, and started devising theories as to the ways and means of doing so."

At last I gave up in disgust. My partner was still attentively listening to the two across the table from us. Another poke in the knee from my partner and I was all attention. One of the fellows across the way was talking:

"Well, I don't see why this French blighter should change horses in his plough every afternoon. I've watched him for several days. In the morning he uses two grays, and then about 2 in the afternoon he either looks up two blacks or a gray and a black. French ways are very different, but this frog-eater is very partial to the colors of his team. He works the grays all morning and then changes them in the afternoon. Now, figure it out for yourself. He starts work with the two grays about 6 o'clock in the morning; works the two beggars up till noon. That's six hours straight. Then he stunts them in the stable, lays off for two hours and in the afternoon about 2 o'clock the new relay of animals comes on and works up till 4. Now, anybody with any brains in their rumpers knows that that is no way to keep horses in condition, working one team over six hours and the other team only two hours. I know, because we have been farmers in our family back in Blighty for generations."

"I was all excitement, and a great hope surged through me that at last we had fallen on the clue that we were looking for. Restraining my eagerness as much as possible, I addressed the fellow who had just spoken:

"Well, mate, I don't like to intrude into your conversation, but I've also been a farmer all my life and I don't see anything so queer in the actions of this French farmer."

"He answered: 'Well, blimey me, there might be a reason for this blighter doing this, but I can't figure it out at all. If you can explain it go ahead.'"

"I answered: 'Well, perhaps if you can give me a little more detail about it, I would be easy enough to explain. Who is the farmer and where is his farm located?'"

"He swallowed the bait, all right, and informed me that the farmer was ploughing a field on a hill about five hundred yards west of the church at the point where our troops were being shelled."

"Buying a round of drinks, I nudged my partner and he came in on the conversation. The two of us, by adroit questioning, got the exact location of the field and a description of the farmer."

"I pretended to be sleepy, and yawning, got up from the table, saying that I was going to turn in and left. My partner soon followed me. Upon reaching our billet we outlined our plan. We decided that next morning we would get up at daybreak and scout around the field to see if there was a hiding place."

"Sure enough, along one edge of the field ran a thick hedge. We secreted

ourselves in this and waited for developments."

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